

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of Mission and wishes to draw their attention to the use of embassy and chancery premises for social events. It has come to the attention of the Department that there may be some confusion on the part of the missions as to the nature of such events which may be conducted on mission premises.

In accordance with Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the premises of the mission are not to be used in any manner incompatible with the functions of the mission. The United States Government has interpreted this provision to mean that mission premises may not be leased or rented for social events or used for events which are not related to the conduct of diplomacy. Thus, the use of embassy and chancery premises for a fee to host wedding receptions or other private events is not permitted.

The Department recognizes, however, that the use of embassy or chancery premises for social events organized in support of charitable causes is well established and furthers the promotion of friendly relations between states. The decision whether to

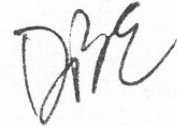
host such events is entirely discretionary with the Chiefs of Mission. Any fees charged in connection with these events should be limited to the cost actually incurred by the mission and not intended to make a profit.

Enclosures:

Circular diplomatic notes dated February 2, 1973 and November 2, 1993.

Department of State,

Washington, May 15, 2002

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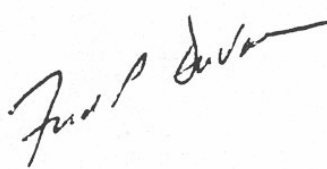
The Secretary of State presents his compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of Mission and wishes to advise them that the attention of the Department has been drawn to the variety of functions open to members of the public which from time to time may be conducted on embassy premises. In this connection, and without prejudice to the inviolability of such premises, the Secretary wishes to remind the Chiefs of Mission of the provisions of Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and of the need to be cognizant of the laws of the United States and of the District of Columbia as regards the health, safety and general conduct of the public.

As the host of such functions, missions should be knowledgeable of and conform to applicable fire regulations and capacity limits for facilities used for receptions, conferences or other activities, as well as with local laws, regulations and prohibitions generally governing the conduct of public gatherings, such as, for example, the prohibition against serving alcohol to persons under the age-of 21.

The Department of State appreciates the unique character of events hosted on chancery premises and brings these matters to the attention of the Chiefs of Mission so that they may be aware of the special responsibilities which may arise in the conduct of such functions and so that no incident or occurrence takes place which would reflect negatively on the diplomatic community.

Department of State

Washington, November 2, 1993



Handwritten signature of Fred P. DuVar.

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs the Chiefs of Mission and has the honor to convey to them the attitude of his Government regarding requests from private individuals and charitable organizations for the use of embassy or chancery premises in Washington for social events that are organized in support of charitable causes.

The Department of State is aware that individuals and organizations often request Chiefs of Mission to provide embassy facilities for social events in support of charity. However worthy such causes may be, compliance with such requests may be inconvenient, time-consuming, and costly for Chiefs of Mission.

The Secretary of State wishes to assure the Chiefs of Mission that it is their prerogative and entirely

- 2 -

within their own discretion to decline to make mission facilities available to the sponsors of such events.

The Department of State also wishes to emphasize that the exercise of that prerogative will in no way impair the relations which a particular embassy or the government it represents enjoys with the United States Government or any of its constituent parts.

Department of State,

Washington, February 2, 1973.

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